

Message Text

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MOSCOW 19032

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TAGS: OEXC, RU, PFOR, US, PINT

SUBJ: ACYPL VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION, NOV. 5-20

REF: (A) STATE 287789; (B) MOSCOW 17017; (C) 75 MOSCOW 15939

SUMMARY. 12-MEMBER DELEGATION FROM THE AMERICAN COUNCIL OF YOUNG POLITICAL LEADERS VISITED THE USSR NOVEMBER 5-20, TOURING MOSCOW, RIGA, LENINGRAD AND ODESSA. PRINCIPAL SUBSTANCE OF THE VISIT DEVELOPED IN RIGA, WHERE THE GROUP RECEIVED BRIEFINGS AT SEVERAL IMPORTANT GOVERNMENT ORGANS, AND IN ODESSA, WHERE THEY PARTICIPATED IN FOUR DAYS OF SEMINARS WITH SOVIET COUNTERPARTS. LARGE NEGATIVE FACTOR PROVED TO BE THE RUSSIAN WEATHER, WHICH ULTIMATELY FORCED CANCELLATION OF POTENTIALLY VERY USEFUL MEETINGS AT THE END OF THE VISIT IN MOSCOW. THE EMBASSY CONTINUES TO BELIEVE (REF C) THAT SUCH VISITS ARE USEFUL BOTH FOR THE PARTICIPANTS AND FOR US, AND SHOULD BE CONTINUED. END SUMMARY.

1. GROUP WAS ABLY LED BY ONLY MEMBER WITH PREVIOUS TRAVEL IN USSR, ROBERT ALLEN. INITIAL MOSCOW PORTION OF VISIT WAS AS REPORTED REF B. RIGA VISIT WAS SUPPLEMENTED BY FULFILLING SOME OF GROUP'S REQUESTS, AS FOLLOWS:

-- NOVEMBER 9: MEETING WITH RECTOR, OFFICIALS AND STUDENTS OF LATVIAN STATE UNIVERSITY; MEETING WITH LOCAL
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ARTISTS, FOLLOWED BY SMALL GROUP MEETINGS AT ARTISTS' HOMES,

-- NOVEMBER 10: MEETINGS AT LATVIAN SUPREME SOVIET AND SUPREME COURT; VISIT TO KINDERGARTEN; VISIT TO FISH-

PRODUCING COLLECTIVE FARM; CATHEDRAL ORGAN CONCERT;
MEETING FOR GROUP'S LEADERS (AND EMBASSY AND CONSULATE-GENERAL
OFFICERS) WITH CP OFFICIALS, FROM YURMALA (LATVIA),

-- NOVEMBER 11: VISIT TO TEXTILE FACTORY; VISIT TO
SECONDARY SCHOOL; MEETING AT LATVIAN KOMSOMOL HEAD-
QUARTERS.

LENINGRAD DPO ACCOMPANIED GROUP ON RIGA PORTION OF THE
TRIP (SEE LENINGRAD A-46). WE WILL BE REPORTING
BY AIRGRAM ON OTHER ASPECTS.

2. THE GROUP'S DAY IN LENINGRAD (NOVEMBER 12) TURNED
OUT TO BE ALL SIGHTSEEING, ALTHOUGH GROUP MEMBERS HAD
OPPORTUNITIES DURING THE DAY TO LEARN SOMETHING ABOUT
THE LOCAL KOMSOMOL ORGANIZATION FROM THEIR ESCORTS.
SOME OF THESE DISCUSSIONS CONTINUED AT A DINNER SHORT-
ENED BY THE NEED TO DEPART FOR THE KIROV BALLET, AND
AT AN INFORMAL COCKTAIL PARTY AT THE HOTEL AFTERWARDS.

3. SCHEDULE IN ODESSA, FROM ARRIVAL NOVEMBER 13 (SEE
MOSCOW 17252) UNTIL SCHEDULED DEPARTURE NOVEMBER 18,
WAS PER REF B. KIEV ADVANCE PARTY CHIEF AND MRS. PORTER ACCOM-
PANIED GROUP FOR PART OF THEIR STAY IN ODESSA, AND WILL
BE REPORTING SEPARATELY. SEMINAR AGENDAS CLOSELY
FOLLOWED LINES SET OUT IN STATE 268971 WERE UNEXCEPTIONAL AND
AS HAS BECOME USUAL IN SUCH EXCHANGES, THE AMERICANS WERE
VERY IMPRESSED WITH THE TECHNICAL EXPERTISE OF THEIR
SOVIET INTERLOCUTORS, AND STRUCK BY CONTRAST BETWEEN THEIR UNYIELD-
ING STANCE ON CONTENTIOUS ISSUES IN LARGE MEETINGS AND
SOFTER POSE IN INDIVIDUAL DISCUSSIONS. BRIEF BREAK-
DOWNS ON THE SEMINARS FOLLOW:

(A) YOUTH. WHILE THE AMERICANS DETAILED ACCESS OF
YOUNG PEOPLE TO OUR POLITICAL PROCESS AND LEISURE
PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES, THE SOVIETS CONCENTRATED
ON OUR CRIME, UNEMPLOYMENT, CIVIL RIGHTS DISTURBANCES
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AND THE COST OF U.S. EDUCATION. WE DETECTED NOTHING
NEW IN SOVIET DISCUSSIONS OF THEIR OWN YOUTH.

(B) SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS. MUCH TIME WAS SPENT IN
THIS GROUP COMPARING RELATIVE MILITARY STRENGTHS,
PARTICULARLY IN EUROPE. THE SOVIET SPEAHEAD IN THIS
SEMINAR WAS USA INSTITUTE DIRECTOR ARBATOV'S SON ALEXEI,
WHO HAS PARTICIPATED IN EARLIER SEMINARS AND CAME TO
THIS ONE ARMED WITH AN IMPRESSIVE ARRAY OF FIGURES.
UNSURPRISINGLY, THE AMERICANS AND SOVIETS DISAGREED
SHARPLY ON SOVIET SUPPORT OF NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVE-
MENTS AS A FACTOR IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS AND MULTI-

LATERAL COOPERATION.

(C) DEVELOPMENT OF US-SOVIET ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND TRADE RELATIONS. SOVIETS CAME OUT STRONG FOR MORE EXCHANGES, PARTICULARLY IN POWER, ENGINEERING AND ENVIRONMENTAL AREAS; US RESPONSE WAS GENERALLY MORE MUTED, AND THERE WERE DISCUSSIONS OF CIVIL RIGHTS IN THE SOVIET UNION IN THIS CONNECTION.

4. THE MEETING WITH ODESSA METROPOLITAN AND HIS STAFF PROVED AN EYE-OPENER FOR SEVERAL OF GROUP'S SOVIET HOSTS, WHO CONFESSED THEY WERE INTERACTING WITH HIGH CHURCH OFFICIALS FOR THE FIRST TIME, AS WELL AS FOR THE AMERICANS, WHO SAW A SKILLFUL TIGHTROPE ACT DURING THE METROPOLITAN'S CAREFULLY BALANCED TOASTS. A COLLECTIVE FARM VISIT, THOUGH IT INVOLVED A WEARISOME BUS RIDE, WAS THE HIGH POINT OF THE TRIP FOR MANY AMERICANS. AT ONE POINT, THE GROUP ARRIVED AT THE LITTLE LOCAL THEATER TO FIND RUSSIANS THREE-DEEP WAITING FOR THEIR FIRST GLIMPSE OF AMERICANS. THE U.S. POLITICOS REVERTED TO FORM, WORKING THE CROWD WITH BOTH HANDS PUMPING OUTSTRETCHED SOVIET ARMS, HANDS, TOPS OF CHILDREN'S HEADS, WHATEVER. MOST CONFESSED LATER IT WAS EASILY THE MOST SPONTANEOUSLY FRIENDLY GREETING THEY HAD RECEIVED ANYWHERE.

5. RETURN TO MOSCOW WAS UNFORTUNATELY ACCOMPLISHED BY TRAIN (23-HOUR RIDE), AS SOUTHERN UKRAINE WAS TOTALLY FOGGED IN. AS A RESULT, POTENTIALLY USEFUL MEETINGS AT GOSPLAN AND SOVIET TRADE UNION HEADQUARTERS, PLUS POSSIBLE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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SESSIONS WITH HIGH PARTY OFFICIALS, WERE STRUCK. COMMENT. THIS WAS PARTICULARLY UNFORTUNATE IN VIEW OF FACT THAT MANY MEMBERS OF THE GROUP WERE BY THIS TIME SUFFICIENTLY KNOWLEDGEABLE TO HAVE ASKED SOME GOOD QUESTIONS AT SUCH MEETINGS. MUCH OF THE CHAFF THEY PERMITTED IN EARLIER MEETINGS WITH SOVIET OFFICIALS WOULD NOT HAVE DIVERTED THESE DISCUSSIONS. END COMMENT. GROUP DID HAVE SHORT SESSION AT USA INSTITUTE WITH ARBATOV, IVANYAN AND INSTITUTE STAFFERS, BUT THEIR TRAIN WEARINESS LED TO BLAND DISCUSSION. BETTER RESULTS WERE ACHIEVED AT EVENING SPASO RECEPTION HOSTED BY CHARGE AND MRS. MATLOCK FOR ACYPL AND VISITING U.S. MAYORS, WHICH USA INSTITUTE STAFFERS ALSO ATTENDED.

6. ACYPL COMMENTS (STATE 269944 AND PREVIOUS) NOTWITH-STAI
ING, MOST DELEGATES ARRIVED IN MOSCOW HAVING RECEIVED ONLY THE FIRST OF TWO ACYPL MAILINGS ON SCHEDULES, WHICH CALLED FOR DEPARTURE NOVEMBER 20. MANY HAD MADE PLANS THEY COULD NOT CHANGE, SO THE EMBASSY'S

LAST MINUTE ARM-TWISTING AT CYO TO EXTEND THE VISIT TO NOVEMBER
22 PROVED EMBARRASSINGLY COUNTERPRODUCTIVE. COMMENT. WE
UNDERSTAND ACYPL STAFF BASICALLY NEWCOMERS AND PERHAPS
THIS ACCOUNTS FOR THE UNFORTUNATE MISUNDERSTANDINGS.
DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO CHECK MORE CAREFULLY FUTURE ACYPL
SCHEDULE REQUESTS AND PLANS. END COMMENT.

7. OVERALL, WEATHER AND DEPARTURE SCHEDULES
ASIDE, THE VISIT WAS USEFUL FOR AMERICAN AND SOVIET PAR-
TICIPANTS AS WELL AS FOR US, CONGEN AND KIEV ADVANCE
PARTY OFFICERS. AS WE POINTED OUT LAST YEAR (REF C),
WE FIND THE ACYPL VISITS INVALUABLE FOR THE CONTACTS
AND REPORTING OPPORTUNITIES THEY PROVIDE. EQUALLY
IMPORTANT, THE AMERICAN PARTICIPANTS ARE ABLE EM-
PIRICALLY TO VERIFY, MODIFY OR CHANGE PREVIOUSLY-HELD
OPINIONS ABOUT THE SOVIET UNION. AS WITH PAST ACYPL
DELEGATIONS, MANY OF THIS YEAR'S GROUP EITHER ADVISE, OR
MAY SOON BECOME, INFLUENTIAL POLITICAL LEADERS. COMING
TO THE USSR WITHOUT THE BOSS AND UNATTENDED BY STAFF GIVES
THE AMERICANS A UNIQUELY VALUABLE CHANCE TO OBSERVE THE
SOVIET UNION AT FIRST HAND BEFORE THEIR OWN ACCESSION TO
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HIGHER POSITIONS MAKES THIS MUCH MORE DIFFICULT.
MATLOCK

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